

Inventor: Bruce C. Johnson

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when flexed acting to stabilize the outer wall tissue and thereby prevent the outer wall tissue of the first and second nasal passages from drawing in during breathing; and

a resilient member defining at least a portion of the first and second end regions and the intermediate segment, whereby the resilient member, in being capable, at least in part, of resilient deformation, allows the truss member to conform to the outer wall tissue of the nasal passages of a nose and provides the inherent tendency of the truss member to return to its [normally planar] initial state when flexed.

8. (Amended) A nasal dilator capable of introducing separating stresses in outer wall tissues of a [section of human anatomy] user's nose, said dilator being of a single body comprising:

a truss [of a single body] having a pair of spaced apart end surfaces which, if forced toward one another from initial positions to substantially reduce direct spacing therebetween by a spacing reduction force external to said truss, results in restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said direct spacing between said end surfaces; and

engagement means adhered to said end surfaces and capable of engaging exposed surfaces of such outer wall tissues sufficiently to remain so engaged against said restoring forces.

Please add the following claims:

23. A nasal dilator capable of introducing separating stresses in outer wall tissues of a user's nose, comprising:

a truss with a resilient member secured therein having a pair of spaced-apart end surfaces which, if forced toward one another from initial positions to

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substantially reduce direct spacing therebetween by a spacing reduction force external to said truss, results in restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said direct spacing between said end surfaces; and engagement means adhered to said end surfaces and capable of engaging exposed surfaces of such outer wall tissues sufficiently to remain so engaged against said restoring forces.

24. The dilator of claim 23 wherein said dilator is a nasal dilator configured to restrain outer wall tissues of a human nose adjacent nasal passages therein from being drawn in during breathing, said truss having sufficient restoring forces to substantially maintain during inhalation that spacing occurring between said end surfaces prior to inhalation.

25. The dilator of claim 23 wherein said truss includes a resilient member providing said restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said spacing between said end surfaces thereof, there being a deformable material between exposed surfaces of any outer wall tissues engaged by said engagement means and said resilient member.

26. The dilator of claim 23 wherein said truss and said engagement means are capable of being manually released from exposed surfaces of any outer wall tissues engaged by said engagement means.

27. The dilator of claim 23 wherein said truss and said engagement means together are formed as a strip having a length substantially greater than either of its width and thickness, and a width substantially greater than its thickness everywhere along said length.

28. The dilator of claim 23 wherein said restoring forces in said truss, arising if said end surfaces are forced adjacent to one another by said spacing reduction force, are

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sufficient, upon removal of said spacing reduction force, to restore most of said direct spacing present between said end surfaces before application of such spacing reduction force.

29. The dilator of claim 23 wherein said spaced-apart end surfaces of said truss are terminated by end edges at opposite ends of said truss, and wherein said truss includes a resilient member providing said restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said spacing between end surfaces thereof, said resilient member having opposite ends thereof each ending short of said end edges.

30. The dilator of claim 25 wherein said end surfaces are limited in separation therebetween so that, when said end surfaces are engaging outer wall tissues of a human nose adjacent nasal passages therein, a surface of said truss can be in contact with said nose for substantially all of that extent thereof between said end surfaces.

31. The dilator of claim 25 wherein said truss further includes a flexible strip of deformable material defining said pair of spaced apart end surfaces with said resilient means positioned adjacent a first side of said flexible strip of deformable material.

32. The dilator of claim 27 wherein said engagement means is an adhesive substance located on each of said pair of spaced apart end surfaces and capable of adhering to exposed surfaces of outer wall tissues while adhering to said truss and yet permitting said truss and said engagement means to be manually released from said exposed surfaces of any such outer wall tissues adhered to by said engagement means.

33. The dilator of claim 27 wherein said strip is of substantially constant thickness.

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34. The dilator of claim 27 wherein said strip is substantially planar absent external forces applied thereto.

35. The dilator of claim 28 therein said truss is of plastic construction.

36. The dilator of claim 29 wherein said truss further includes a flexible strip of material defining said pair of spaced-apart end surfaces with said resilient means being positioned adjacent a first side of said flexible strip of material.

37. The dilator of claim 32 wherein said adhesive substance located on each of said pair of spaced apart surfaces is capable of adhering to a covering means while adhering to said truss prior to any engaging of exposed surfaces of wall tissues yet permitting said covering means to be manually removed therefrom.

38. An external nasal dilator capable of introducing separating stresses in outer wall tissues of a user's nose, said dilator being of a single body comprising:

a truss having a pair of spaced-apart end surfaces which, if forced toward one another from initial positions to substantially reduce direct spacing therebetween by a spacing reduction force external to said truss, results in restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said direct spacing between said end surfaces; and

engagement means on said end surfaces and capable of engaging exposed surfaces of such outer wall tissues sufficiently to remain so engaged against said restoring forces.

39. The dilator of claim 38 wherein said dilator is a nasal dilator configured to restrain outer wall tissues of a human nose adjacent nasal passages therein from being drawn

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in during breathing, said truss having sufficient restoring forces to substantially maintain during inhalation that spacing occurring between said end surfaces prior to inhalation.

40. The dilator of claim 38 wherein said truss includes a resilient member providing said restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said spacing between said end surfaces thereof, there being a deformable material between exposed surfaces of any outer wall tissues engaged by said engagement means and said resilient member.

41. The dilator of claim 38 wherein said truss and said engagement means are capable of being manually released from exposed surfaces of any outer wall tissues engaged by said engagement means.

42. The dilator of claim 38 wherein said truss and said engagement means together are formed as a strip having a length substantially greater than either of its width and thickness, and a width substantially greater than its thickness everywhere along said length.

43. The dilator of claim 38 wherein said restoring forces in said truss, arising if said end surfaces are forced adjacent to one another by said spacing reduction force, are sufficient, upon removal of said spacing reduction force, to restore most of said direct spacing present between said end surfaces before application of such spacing reduction force.

44. The dilator of claim 38 wherein said spaced-apart end surfaces of said truss are terminated by end edges at opposite ends of said truss, and wherein said truss includes a resilient member providing said restoring forces in said truss tending to restore said spacing between end surfaces thereof, said resilient member having opposite ends thereof each ending short of said end edges.

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45. The dilator of claim 40 wherein said end surfaces are limited in separation therebetween so that, when said end surfaces are engaging outer wall tissues of a human nose adjacent nasal passages therein, a surface of said truss can be in contact with said nose for substantially all of that extent thereof between said end surfaces.

46. The dilator of claim 40 wherein said truss further includes a flexible strip of deformable material defining said pair of spaced apart end surfaces with said resilient means positioned adjacent a first side of said flexible strip of deformable material.

47. The dilator of claim 42 wherein said engagement means is an adhesive substance located on each of said pair of spaced apart end surfaces and capable of adhering to exposed surfaces of outer wall tissues while adhering to said truss and yet permitting said truss and said engagement means to be manually released from said exposed surfaces of any such outer wall tissues adhered to by said engagement means.

48. The dilator of claim 42 wherein said strip is of substantially constant thickness.

49. The dilator of claim 42 wherein said strip is substantially planar absent external forces applied thereto.

50. The dilator of claim 43 therein said truss is of plastic construction.

51. The dilator of claim 44 wherein said truss further includes a flexible strip of material defining said pair of spaced-apart end surfaces with said resilient means being positioned adjacent a first side of said flexible strip of material.